

REGULAR MEETING OF THE JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL
October 18, 2016

The Jasper County Council met this date at 7:00 P.M. C.S.T. in the Commissioners’ Room, Suite 202, of the Jasper County Courthouse located at 115 West Washington Street, Rensselaer, Indiana, with the following members present: Rein Bontreger, Gerrit H. DeVries, John T. Price, Andrew Andree, Stephen Jordan, Gary Fritts and Paul Norwine. Also present was Kimberly K. Grow, Jasper County Auditor and Tina Porter, Deputy Auditor. Mr. Bontreger called the meeting to order and those present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Price.

MINUTES: Mr. Jordan stated that it says that the Council moved to adopt the minutes, but it does not say that they ever voted on it. He is sure it was voted on, but the minutes do not reflect that. Mr. DeVries stated that on page five under Purdue Extension Webinar, the correct spelling of Larry’s last name is DeBoer. Mr. DeVries made the motion to adopt the minutes, as presented, with the noted corrections. Mr. Jordan seconded and motion carried unanimously.

BINDING UNITS BUDGET ADOPTION

JASPER COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY: Mr. Jackson and Mr. Seif were present and were asked by Mr. Bontreger if they had any additional questions or concerns. They replied that they do not. Mr. DeVries commended them on a job well done.

Mr. Bontreger read aloud the following requested amounts:

Rainy Day	\$0
Airport Authority	\$247,657
Cumulative Airport Building	\$16,200
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Total	\$263,857
Rotary Fuel Fund	\$99,250

The adopted cumulative tax rate is .0148. Mr. Andree made the motion to approve the Airport budget as presented. Mr. Norwine seconded and the motion carried unanimously. **Ordinance Number 10-18-2016A**

IROQUOIS CONSERVANCY DISTRICT BUDGET: The total budget request was \$222,500. The adopted tax rate is .0054. Mr. Fritts made the motion to approve the Iroquois Conservancy budget as presented. Mr. DeVries seconded and the motion carried unanimously. **Ordinance Number 10-18-2016B**

NORTHWEST INDIANA SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT: The total budget request was \$622,150. This budget is approved by the Solid Waste Board prior to being presented to the Council. It is presented to Jasper since we are the largest County in the district. Mr. Jordan made the motion to approve the Solid Waste budget as presented. Mr. Andree seconded and the motion carried unanimously. **Ordinance Number 10-18-2016C**

NED SPEICHER / RENSSELAER CENTRAL SCHOOL CORP: Mr. Speicher was present and stated, in regards to the 2016 budget, they will be needing to request an additional appropriation within the next few months. There is a delay with the State getting them their ISTEP results, which in turn delays their ability to conduct teacher reviews and give pay increases since the reviews are tied to ISTEP performance. There was also a delay with the 2015 results, which caused them to have to use 2016 money. Mr. Bontreger asked him if he’d like to make any comments on the budget. Mr. Speicher stated that the total budget of \$16,980,337 is \$333,210 less than what was advertised last year and it will be cut back when final information comes from the State. He stated that the School Board has approved the budget. Mr. Norwine asked how much turn-over they’ve been going through. He replied that there’s been very little in the past few years. They are having trouble finding staff. He said there’s a shortage of qualified teachers. For years, there was a surplus, but now they are struggling to find teachers with appropriate licenses.

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NED SPEICHER / RENSSELAER CENTRAL SCHOOL CORP CONT'D: Mr. Jordan asked what their enrollment numbers are. He replied that they are up sixteen, which equates to about \$100,000 in state funding. Mr. Norwine asked if they have an open enrollment. Mr. Speicher replied that they do, as long as it's done before August 1st. They do not accept students after the ADM count, unless they move in to the district.

RENSSELAER CENTRAL SCHOOL CORPORATION: Mr. Bontreger read aloud the following requested amounts:

General	\$10,837,720
Debt Service	\$2,194,792
Capital Projects (School)	\$2,905,568
Transportation	\$842,257
Bus Replacement	\$200,000
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Total	\$16,980,337

Mr. Norwine made the motion to approve the budget as requested. Mr. Fritts seconded and the motion carried unanimously. **Ordinance Number 10-18-2016D**

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION / VINCE URBANO / COUNTY SURVEYOR: Mr. Urbano was present and stated that he's out of part-time money. He believes that they are about five to six percent done with witnessing. The State requires that ten percent be done each year. He has a full-time and part-time employee that work on that, along with their other duties. He did request it in his budget last year and it did not get appropriated. He stated that he's also short roughly \$140.00 in the Drainage Board Fund, which is the fund he uses to pay the Commissioners to serve on that Board. It's because of all the special meetings they've had this year. He said he's asking for \$5,140. He did not formally request the \$140 because he just noticed it at the last Drainage Board meeting when he was looking at the account. Mr. Bontreger asked if we'll be addressing that at the next meeting. Auditor Grow asked Mr. Urbano to send a formal request to Mrs. Porter and we will get it taken care of. Mr. Fritts asked Mr. Urbano if he could explain what witnessing is. He replied that we have several hundred monuments in our County that we have to keep up to date. His department has to witness ten percent of them per year and send the info to the State so they can keep record of it as well. They use GPS to get coordinates and try to tie it all in to the overall grid. Mr. Bontreger asked if they are property markers. Mr. Urbano replied that they are the "key" for the surveyors to create property markers. Mr. Fritts asked if these are the concrete squares that are sticking out of the ground. Mr. Urbano replied that those are benchmarks, which are used to measure elevation points that periodically have to be checked to make sure the ground isn't fluctuating. There are also right of way markers on State Highways that look similar to the bench marks that the Surveyor's office sets. Mr. Norwine made the motion to approve the additional appropriation request in the amount of \$5,000.00. Mr. DeVries seconded and the motion carried unanimously. **Ordinance Number 10-18-2016E**

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION / SHERIFF RISNER: Sheriff Risner was present and stated that he'd like to thank the Council for their hard work, kindness and concern over the past few months while working on budget issues. This additional request is for the part-time Correctional Officer. He stated that they've been short-handed the past nine months and have gone through a continuous succession of a loss of manpower. This request is for the Officers that predominately work the Control Facility. This area is manned twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Part-time Officers are still required to go through the necessary training, which sometimes means traveling and overnight stays. Sheriff Risner stated that the \$25,000.00 will get them through the rest of the year. Any money left will revert back to the General Fund. The Control Facility is manned with part-time people about sixty to sixty-five percent of the time. Mr. Bontreger asked what the current census is. Sheriff Risner replied that they have been running steady the past few months in the eighties. Mr. Jordan asked, with some of the employees leaving, if he will have funds available that aren't being used. He replied that when they leave, they have to be paid for their vacation and sick time. If they are able to transfer money, they do, but lately have not had any available to transfer.

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ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION / SHERIFF RISNER CONT'D: Mr. Norwine made the motion to approve the additional appropriation in the amount of \$25,000.00. Mr. Fritts seconded and the motion carried unanimously. **Ordinance Number 10-18-2016F**

SHERIFF / ACTIVE SHOOTER TRAINING: Mr. Norwine asked how the training went. Sheriff Risner replied that it went really good and would have been hard to replicate without using that type of facility (Kankakee Valley High School).

SHERIFF / RADIO UPDATE: Mr. Fritts asked if the radio situation was up and running. Sheriff Risner replied that they are still waiting on the P25. They saved about \$50,000 by not putting in the current system. The P25 is a State migrated upgrade that started in the South end of the State and is working it's way up here. Until they do the change-over, we won't be on that tower. He said they've sent out letters to fire and ambulance stating that they can use the tower on VHF, but would need to pay to install the equipment. He stated that they have not signed off for Motorola yet. Motorola still holds the contract on the construction and we are just paying the electricity. Mr. Bontreger asked, with the P25 system, will it be up to individual departments or the LEPC to ensure that everyone gets at least one radio that would work on that system? Sheriff Risner replied that our radio provider, Raycom out of Lafayette, has to come in and "touch" all eight-hundred radios. As of right now, the radios are basically a computer. They would plug it in to a laptop, set it up for the P25 upgrade and download it. Mr. Bontreger asked if other departments such as fire, city, etc have any of the same equipment that can be upgraded. Sheriff Risner replied that if they have eight hundred radios, they would need to be upgraded as well or it won't work. Some of the old eight hundred radios are not programmable to the P25, which is why they've phased them out over the past couple years. He said they've kept the VHF as a back-up. He thinks it would be a good idea for EMA to touch base with people. Mr. Bontreger replied that he believes she is. Sheriff Risner said that they're hoping to be here doing the upgrade in December.

TRANSFER / PURDUE EXTENSION OFFICE: A request has been made to transfer \$200.00 to Office Supplies from Travel. Mr. Andree made the motion to approve the request. Mr. Jordan seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

TRANSFER / SURVEYOR'S OFFICE: A request has been made to transfer \$600.00 to Field Equipment from Equipment Repair. Mr. DeVries made the motion to approve the request. Mr. Fritts seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

TRANSFER / VETERANS' SERVICE OFFICE: A request has been made to transfer \$400.00 from Travel to Office Supplies. Mr. Norwine made the motion to approve the request. Mr. Andree seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

SALARY ORDINANCE AMENDMENT / ANIMAL CONTROL DIRECTOR: Auditor Grow presented an Ordinance to amend the salary for the Animal Control Director (**Ordinance 2016-06A**). Mr. Fritts made the motion to approve. Mr. Jordan seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

FAIRGROUNDS PROPERTY / PURCHASE AGREEMENT: Attorney Monfort was present and stated that this first came up in August of 2016 and has moved along very quickly. He said he wanted to compliment the Council and the Commissioners for that. The duty, under Statute, is that the purchase of any County property having a value of \$1,000.00 or more has to be approved and authorized by an ordinance by the County fiscal body. The specific price, since the agreement states that we would pay for the survey and the closing costs, will be presented to the Council once they have the exact numbers. Being that it's harvest season and Mr. Kingman is busy, the survey has not been done. He stated that the request is for the Council to approve the Ordinance tonight, find that it's in the best interest of Jasper County that we acquire this property and the specific numbers will be presented at closing. Mr. Fritts made the motion to approve the purchase, as presented, with the specific dollar amount to be determined and presented at that time. Mr. Andree seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

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PROPERTY TAXES: Mr. Norwine stated that he wanted to make the citizens aware that if their property taxes go up, it was not the Council's doing, but rather due to a bill that was put through the Legislature.

BICENTENNIAL TORCH RELAY: Mr. Bontreger recognized Mr. DeVries for his role as a Torch Bearer. He asked Mr. DeVries if he would like to share any thoughts about his participation. Mr. DeVries stated that it was an overwhelming experience. His part of the relay brought him to the middle of where the Demotte Elementary and Demotte Christian School students were. They were cheering and holding hand-made signs. There were videos of the relay posted on Facebook and he thought it was very well structured and nice to see how each County put their own spin on it to demonstrate what the County stood for or what they are known for.

RENSSELAER AG DEPARTMENT: Mr. Norwine wanted to congratulate Mr. Wamsley at the high school and the soil judging team. Mr. Jordan stated that they've always done well and this year excelled to the next level. It's an honor for them to place as high as they did. They were State Soil Judge Champions and will be going to Oklahoma for Nationals. Years ago, Byron Callahan laid a good foundation for the Ag program and passed it on to Mr. Wamsley. Mr. Jordan stated that they have a big following of parents and support people and are lucky to have such a great program.

At this time, Mr. Bontreger welcomed public comment, to which there was none.

RAY SEIF / JASPER COUNTY AIRPORT: Mr. Fritts asked Mr. Seif how things are going at the Airport. He replied that things are good and they are in to their third week of construction on the hangar, which is scheduled to be completed before the end of the year.

COURTHOUSE FLOWER POTS: Attorney Monfort commented that he really likes the flower pots. They are wonderful and compliment the building. Auditor Grow stated that Tourism supported that.

There being no further business, Mr. Jordan made the motion to adjourn. Mr. DeVries seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Rein O. Bontreger

ATTEST:

Kimberly K. Grow, Auditor of Jasper County

